



PHOTOGRAPHIC  
INTERPRETATION  
MEMORANDUM ON  
PROBABLE  
COMMUNIST ACTIVITY IN  
NORTHEAST CAMBODIA

NPIC/R-29/68  
FEBRUARY 1968

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# PREFACE

Analysis of aerial photography, in preparation of a detailed report on insurgent activity in Cambodia, has revealed information which is similar in some respects to the patterns noted in photography before earlier communist attacks against U.S. forces in South Vietnam.

This memorandum is essentially a think-piece produced by NPIC to generate study and attention by finished-intelligence analysts. This information was disseminated earlier by NPIC Cable 3045 to the Washington community. [REDACTED] aerial photog-raphy, the principal sources used in preparing this report, was collected over the past three years.

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MEMORANDUM ON PROBABLE COMMUNIST ACTIVITY IN NORTHEAST CAMBODIA

Analysis of photography reflects growing communist use of Cambodia in support of military operations in South Vietnam. It also reflects considerable systematic growth of insurgency-related facilities and logistics activities in Cambodia. The scale of road construction and improvements and the upswing in stockpiling of supplies, suggest the possibility that the communists may be counting on long term use of Cambodia in prosecuting their efforts in South Vietnam.

In some areas it is not possible to tell whether the communist facilities in Cambodia are there to serve as refuge points for forces withdrawing from South Vietnam to Cambodian havens or are there to serve as facilities to support new and forthcoming communist military operations. There are some similarities in the patterns noted in the photography to preparations for earlier communist military moves against U.S. forces at Dak To, Loc Ninh, and Bu Dop in South Vietnam. If these patterns are valid, there may be particular reason for concern in the Duc Co, Plei Me, Pleiku triangle of South Vietnam. Communist facilities and activity on nearby Cambodian soil have grown significantly in recent months and could be regarded as an indication of preparations for a thrust.

Of particular interest is the 29 by 18-nm area designated as the Tonle San Base Area in Cambodia, which extends within approximately 12 nm of Duc Co Special Forces Camp, South Vietnam. The recent completion (Figure 1), of an approximately 16-nm segment of an unnumbered road from Route 19, just north of Boung Long, to the Tonle San (river) affords a means of expediting shipments of supplies. The motorized river craft on the Tonle San have at least doubled in [REDACTED] and evidence of supply stockpiling has been observed along the new road and the river since late [REDACTED] (Figure 2). In addition, approximately 125 photographic signatures have been observed denoting probable insurgent activities. These include storage facilities; bivouac and staging areas; numerous agricultural areas not following an indigenous pattern; defenses including trenching, foxholes, and automatic weapons positions; a rocket/mortar training area; liaison/way stations; a probable rest and rehabilitation facility; and truck parks and road-to-water transshipment points interconnected by a maze of well concealed trails.

In the Prek Drang (Ia Drang) Base Area, south of Route 19, stockpiling has been observed during the past two months along the unnumbered road completed in [REDACTED] between Lomphat and the Prek Drang (river). Increasing vehicular track activity has also been observed since [REDACTED] along this road between the military storage facilities at Lomphat and storage facilities midway between Lomphat and the South Vietnam border. Since [REDACTED] heavily-used trails have been observed extending from the

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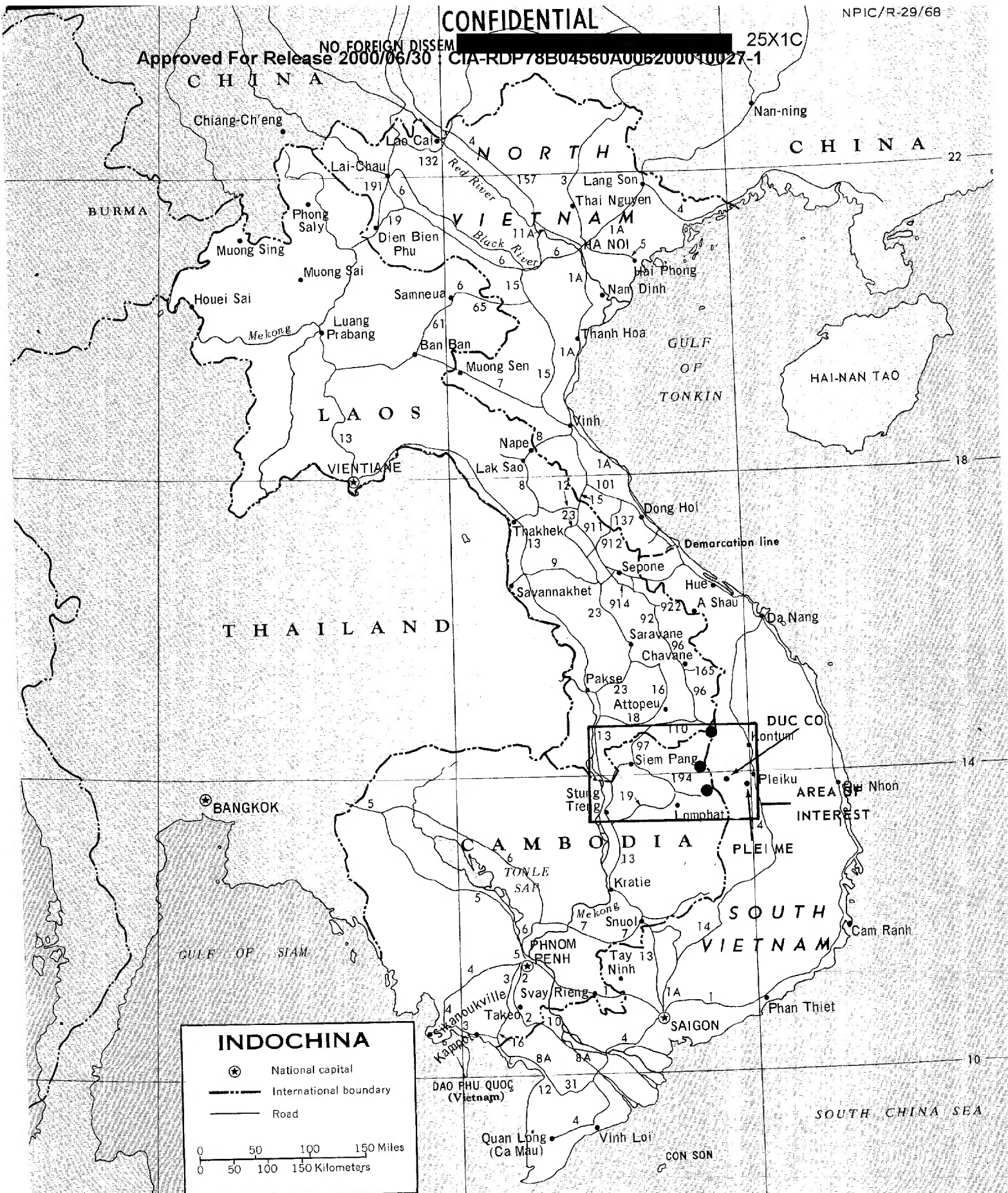
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eastern terminus of the road continuing eastward into South Vietnam. Trenches and foxholes are observed along these trails in both Cambodia and South Vietnam (Figure 3). The present level of activity in this area is similar to that described above in the Tonle San Base Area.

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The extension of Route 110 into the Tri-border Base Area of Cambodia, observed on [REDACTED] connects this area to the Tonle Kong (river), where motorized river craft increased by approximately 75 percent in [REDACTED]. The increase in vehicular activity in Laos on Route 110, since it was extended to the Base Area, indicates increased reliance on major storage/transshipment facilities here for supplies being shipped to communist forces in the immediate area. 25X1D

Activity in the three areas mentioned above bears similarity to that noted in the Tri-border Area, Ph O'Moha, and Snuol before the communist military moves against U.S. forces in Dak To, Loc Ninh, and Bu Dop.

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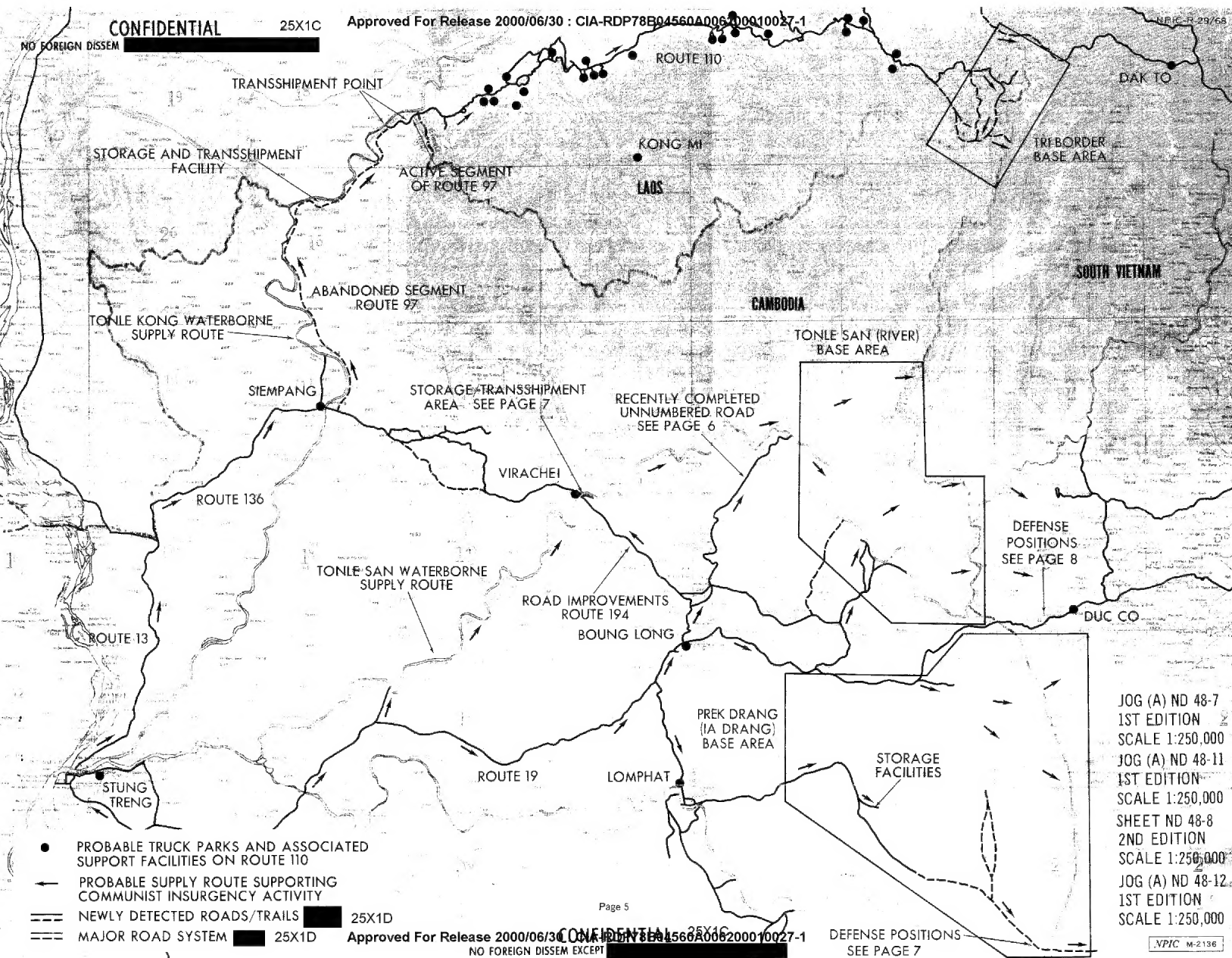


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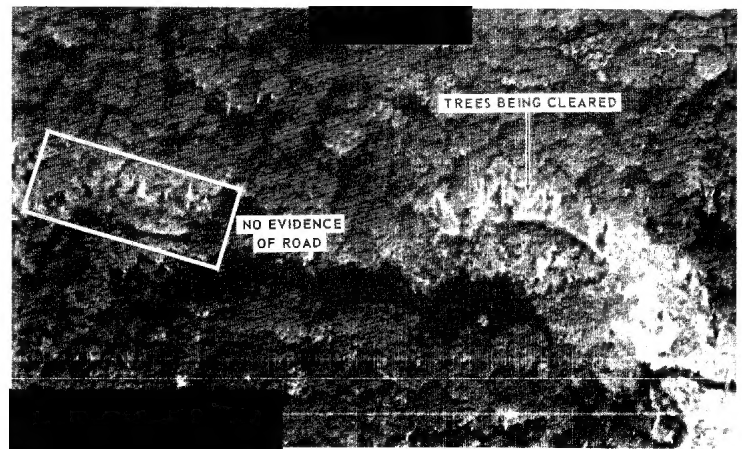
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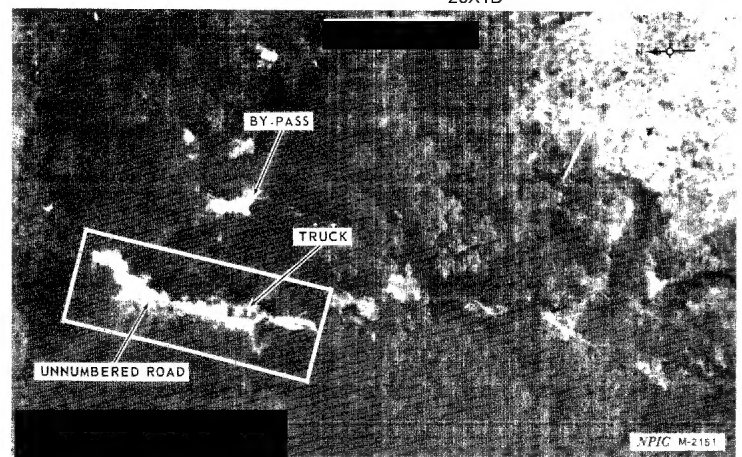
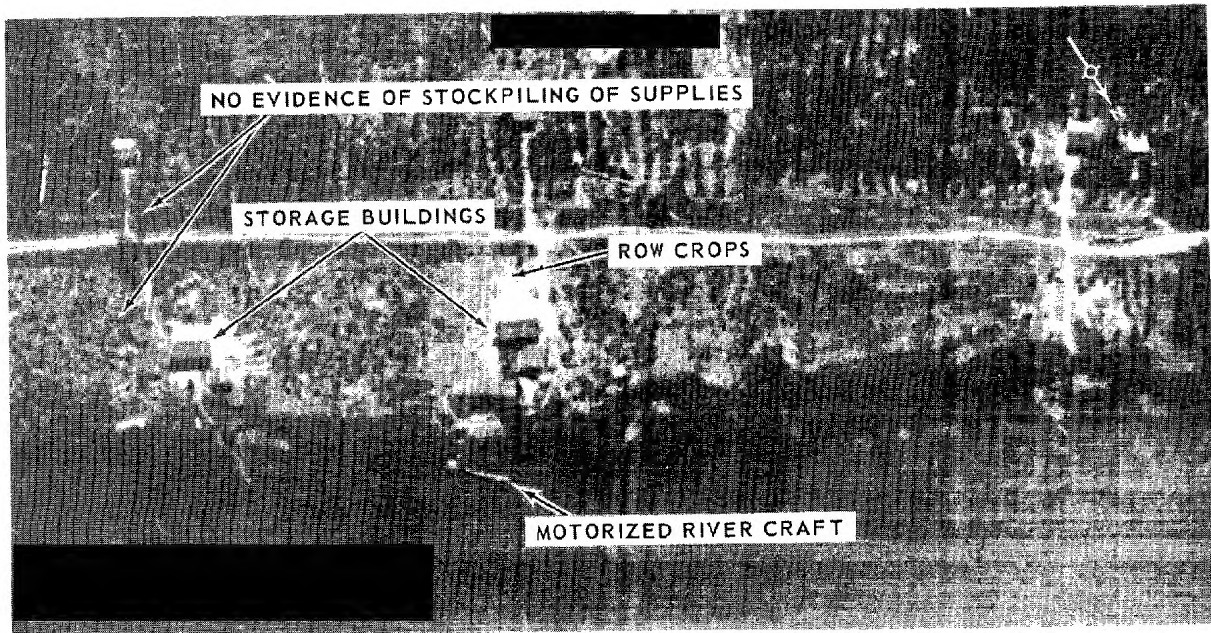


FIGURE 1. COMPLETION OF UNNUMBERED ROAD FROM ROUTE 19 TO TONLE SAN (RIVER) DURING 2-WEEK PERIOD.

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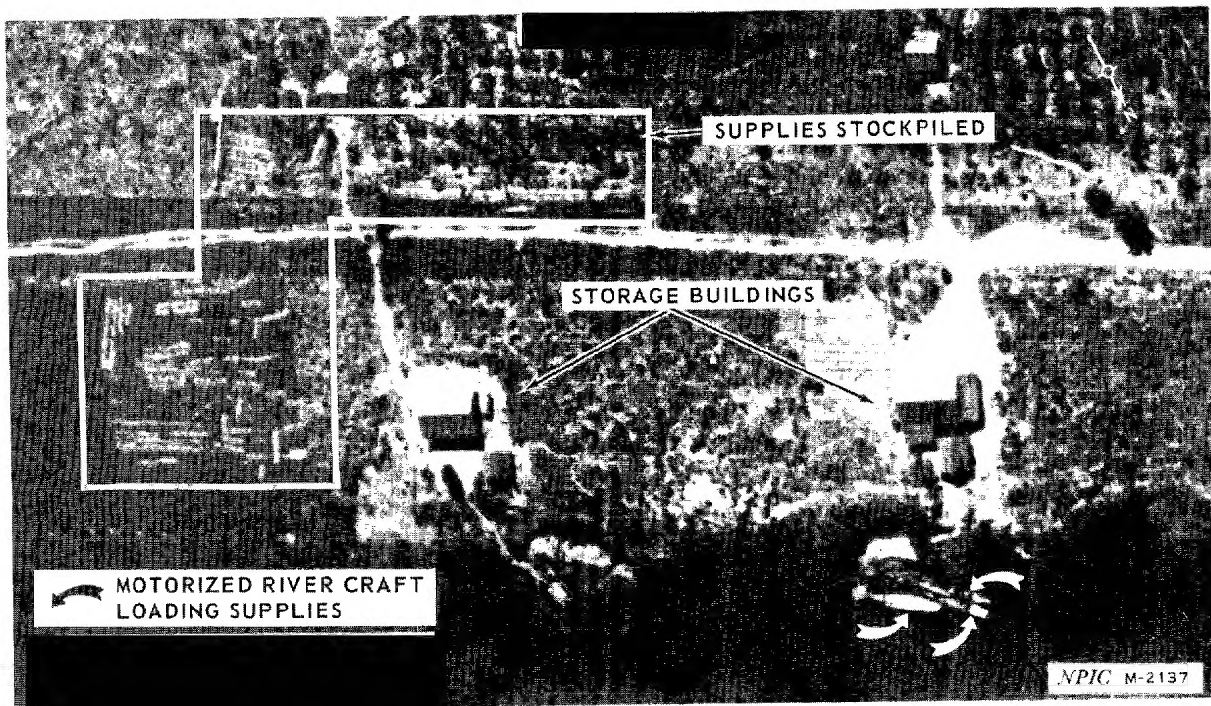


FIGURE 2. ROAD-TO-WATER TRANSSHIPMENT POINT AND STORAGE AREA, TONLE SAN (RIVER), VIRACHEI, CAMBODIA

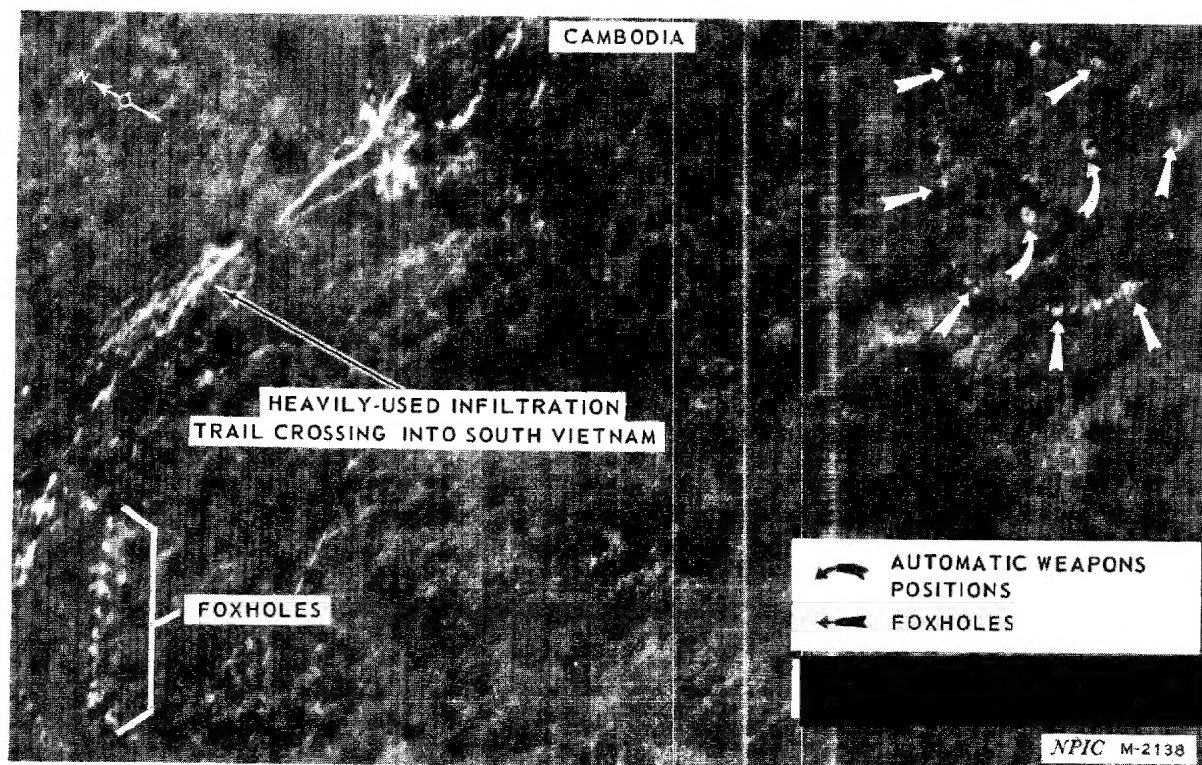


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PROBABLE COMMUNIST DEFENSES LOCATED IN DUC CO AREA, SOUTH VIETNAM.



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FIGURE 3. SIMILAR PATTERNS IN DEFENSE POSITIONS IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM. TOP PHOTO SHOWS KNOWN COMMUNIST POSITIONS IN THE DUC CO AREA, SOUTH VIETNAM, BOTTOM IS IN THE INSURGENT AREA IN PREK DRANG (IA DRANG) BASE AREA, CAMBODIA. THE TRAIL, FIRST OBSERVED IN [REDACTED] CONNECTS THE UNNUMBERED ROAD FROM LOMPHAT, CAMBODIA, WITH THE INFILTRATION NETWORK IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

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